

REMARKS**1. Petition to Withdraw from Issue.**

The present paper is filed together with Applicants' Petition to Withdraw from Issue. The Issue Fee was paid on February 4, 2004. Applicants have corresponding applications pending in both Europe and Canada. While reviewing the files with respect to the Canadian application, it was discovered that the European Search Report, and references cited therein, inadvertently had not been submitted to the USPTO during the pendency of the present U.S. application. In order to remedy this inadvertence, Applicant elected to file the Petition to Withdraw from Issue, a Request for Continued Examination, and an Information Disclosure Statement, in which the European Search Report and references cited therein are cited. In addition, Applicants wish to bring to the Office's attention a copending commonly assigned application, now issued as U.S. Patent No. 5,883,057, that was filed on the same date as the present application.

2. Information Disclosure Statement Submitted with RCE.

In the IDS submitted with the RCE filed herewith, Applicants note that three of the references cited in the European Search Report (DE 19 13 539, FR 2 245 757 (as CA 1043322), and FR 2 298 597 (as US 3994815)) were previously of record in the present application. These three references are not listed in the form PTO-1449 submitted with the RCE. Applicants further note that FR 1 552 150 is in French, but its US equivalent, US 3634249, is also submitted in the IDS submitted with the RCE.

3. Communication Mailed March 10, 2004.

In the Communication mailed March 10, 2004, the Examiner stated that two references submitted in the IDS received in the Office on January 16, 2004, DE 2,524,118 and DE 1,913,539, were not considered because they are not in English and no translation has been submitted.

Applicants note that DE 2,524,118 corresponds to U.S. Patent No. 4,031,020, which was made of record in the IDS filed May 14, 1999.

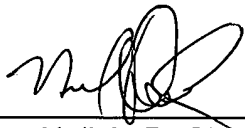
Applicants note that DE 1,913,539 is available only in German, and no English translation is available. Applicants further note that the Derwent abstract for this German publication was made of record in the IDS filed May 14, 1999.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that both of these references are properly of record and have been considered by the Examiner during the examination of the present application.

In the event issues arise as a result of the filing of this paper, or remain in the prosecution of this application, Applicants request that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney to expedite issuance of the patent.

Respectfully submitted,

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